nature net

The **Nature***Kenya* Newsletter

December 2000 & January 2001

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REPORTING

THE TENTH PAN AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS (PAOC10) 1 – 8 September '00 A Milestone for NatureUganda

Hosted in conjunction with Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, PAOC10 was the first of the new millennium and the biggest ever.

With the theme "Birds and Biodiversity" the congress brought together 300 scientists from 54 different countries, including a very large number of francophone countries. This was a big contribution towards efforts promoting collaboration between French and English speaking African countries.

The opening ceremony presided over by Hon Prof. Mondo Kagonyera (who represented the Prime Minister of Uganda) attracted various members of parliament. Over 60 oral and 60 poster presentations were made highlighting the role played by birds in promoting the understanding and conservation of biodiversity.

Nature Uganda members were very supportive. They made up the local organising committee, chaired some of the scientific sessions, presented papers and volunteers made sure that delegates were appropriately facilitated.

Nature Uganda was able to bring together various stakeholders and recieved support from local conservation and corporate organisations. PAOC10 received support from Barclays Bank of Uganda, New Vision, Alliance Francaise, Civil Aviation Authority, Wetlands Programme, Wildlife Clubs of Uganda ARCOS and the Mgahinga Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Conservation Trust.

The challenge now for NatureUganda is to keep up this degree of collaboration with stakeholders, companies and individuals and involve them in its programmes.

By Pauline Nantongo, Events Officer

(Extracted from *The Naturalist*, the Nature Uganda newsletter. NatureUganda, the EANHS, P O Box 27034, Kampala. Tel: +256-41-540719, Fax: +256-41-533528)

TALKS & VIDEOS

TAITA HILLS BIODIVERSITY PROJECT TALK BY BENNY BYTEBIER

Monday 8 January '01, 5:30 p.m.
National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi, FORD HALL
Refreshments prior & Town drop off

The Taita Hills Biodiversity Project is a collaboration between the National Museums of Kenya, Kenyatta University, the Royal Museum for Central Africa and the University of Antwerp, in Belgium.

The project ran for about about four years and intended to document the biodiversity of the few remaining Taita Hills mist forests and to investigate the influence of forest fragmentation on the biodiversity.

During his talk the main activities and findings of the project will be highlighted in an informal way.

DUDU TRAINING

A Parataxonomist Training Course and The Fundamentals of Entomology
December 4 – 9, 2000

By: The National Museums of Kenya and The Royal Museum for Central Africa, Belguim
At: The Taita Discovery Centre (near TSAVO EAST NP)
Costs: With transport to/from Nairobi - Kshs 21,000 per person. Use your own transport - Kshs 15,000 per person.

This programme is being specifically developed for The Kenya Wildlife Service with the aim of training rangers and GUIDES in the Fundamentals of Entomology.

Limited Spaces Available: Sign up now by contacting:
Steve Turner, Tel # 222075, Fax # 330698
11th Floor Fedha Towers, Standard Street (physical)
e-mail - eaos@africaonline.co.ke

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Nature Kenya, Executive Officer

Philip Adolwa, who joined Nature Kenya as Executive Officer in July this year, is leaving Kenya to live in the United States. We wish him all the best.

This means that we are once again looking for an Executive Officer. This is a key post in the Society: the EO has overall responsibility for the office and for various projects, and works closely with our Committees to develop the Society's programmes. It's a position that offers the right person great opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We are seeking a responsible, energetic and well-organised Kenya citizen with:

**At leost a first degree*
**A strong and demonstrable interest in natural history*
**A clear commitment to conservatian and the Society's gools*
**Excellent teomwork ond cammunication skills*
**Good computer literocy*
**Experience in administratian ond project management*
**Same basic knowledge of occounting*

A full job description is available from the office (please call or e-mail). If you are interested and think you fit the criteria, please apply to **The Chairman, Nature Kenya** by **8 December 2000**. Include your CV, a daytime telephone contact and the full contact details of two referees. E-mail applications are welcome. **If you already applied for this post earlier in the year, there is no need to apply again.**

TROPICAL SOIL BIOLOGY AND FERTILITYPROGRAMME

Research Assistant, Data Analysis And Modelling

The Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Programme (TSBF), is an autonomous international agricultural research programme directed at the development of sustainable soil fertility management practices. The Programme is hosted by UNESCO at the UN Offices in Nairobi.

TSBF now seeks to recruit a **Research Assistant** who will provide support to the Programme's Scientists on soil fertility and nutrient management including, crop simulation modelling data analysis and database management.

Qualification and Experience
A Masters Degree in Agricultural Sciences, Forestry or Ecology. Key criteria for consideration for the post are demonstrated experience with computer spreadsheets, statistical packages, and simulation modelling.

For further information write to: Ms Juliet Ogola, TSBF, c/o UNESCO-Nairobi, P. O Box 30592, NAIROBI

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED WORLD BIRDWATCH '01

Since 1993, on the first weekend of October, more than a million people, all over the world, go BIRD WATCHING! This event takes place every two years with the principal aim of enhancing environmental awareness. Locally, it is organised by NatureKenya the Birdlife partner in Kenya.

We have found that for good organisation we need to plan at least ten months in advance. To prepare for next year's event we are looking for enthusiastic people to form a working committee.

We also require one or two persons to form a secretariat, to take overall responsibility for the event. This includes handling correspondence, visiting sponsors and liaison with birdwatchers. No bird experience is necessary but computer literacy is useful. These are volunteer positions, but expenses can be re-imbursed.

If you are interested please write, phone or email the Office Manager, Nature Kenya.

TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION

Assistant Project Officer

Tropical Biology Association develops and supports education and research in tropical ecology and conservation biology. TBA runs field courses for graduate biologists from Africa and Europe and provides follow-up support. TBA and Nature Kenya, which work together under a Memorandum of Agreement, invite applications for the post of Assistant Project Officer to be based at the Nature Kenya offices in Nairobi.

We are looking for a highly-motivated Kenyan with:

**At least a first degree in an environmentol or educatianal field *A strang interest in bialagical troining ond reseorch *Experience with conservotion ond reseorch orgonisotians *Good organisotionol ond presentation skills *Willingness ta shore infarmation and wark irregulor haurs when necessary *A high degree af camputer literocy *Experience of working with dotabases wauld be on odvontage*

A full job description is available from the office. Applications, including full contact details (telephone/fax and email if appropriate) and the full contacts of two referees, should be sent to: **The Project Officer, Tropical Biology Association** at the Nature Kenya address or email tba2@africaonline.co.ke or hand-deliver to the Nature Kenya offices, to arrive by **8 December 2000.**

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

POT LUCK OUTINGS

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 17 December & 21 January**. They decide where to go and what to do - usually observing birds and nature in general. Bring lunch.

TREE WALK

Arboretum guided Tree Walks on the last Monday of every month i.e. **29 January from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the FONA offices beside the Girl Guides HQ. **(No walk in December)**

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Kshs 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.

★ MEMBERS LUNCH

Join this informal discussion group on **Wednesday 31 January, 1:00 p.m.** and share with other members your thoughts on issues related to wildlife and the environment. Nairobi Botanic Garden, National Museums of Kenya. Bring your lunch.

ARABUKO SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **2 December & 6 January, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person.

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any for loss, injury, death or damage to property.

Editor, **Catherine Ngarachu**

Bird Hotline

Please note the records below are unconfirmed

Bohm's Spinetail, Black and White Flycatchers, Kenrick's Starlings

Kaaga Forest, Behind Kenya Methodist Univ., Meru/ Nov Delas McCauley & Sammy Leseita

Hundreds of Cattle Egret and Sacred Ibis roosting, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Squacco Heron

Lake View Estate/ Nov

Nature Kenya staff outing

juvenile African Wood Owl, *Nairobi Arboretum/Nov* Plant Walk

White-bellied Bustard, Hartlaub's Bustard, Heuglin's Bustard, Crested Bustard, Caspian Plover, Pringle's Puffback

Taita Discovery Centre in Taita Ranch/ Oct Nature Kenya Members Trip

Bar-tailed Godwit

Aruba Dam in Tsavo East National Park / *Oct* Marlene Reid, Stephen Siegfried

African Open-billed Storks building nests

Mtwapa on Mombasa-Malindi road / Oct

F. Ng'weno. H. Gamez de Silva, B. Chege

African Skimmers, thousands of Terns

Dunga Fishing Beach, Kisumu/ Oct

F. Ng'weno, N. Nalianya, B. Chege, Hector Gomez de Silva

Hairy-breasted Borbet with nest-hole, Long-crested Eagle with nest

Rando Retreat Centre, Kakamega Forest/ Oct-Nov Hectar Gomez de Silva

Blue-Mantled Crested Flycotcher,

Forest 4Kms outside of Meru Town/ Oct

Delos & Hazel McCauley, Phyllis Paltridge, Sammy Leseita

Green-backed Woodpecker, Black and White-Cosqued Hornbill

Talek River, Masai Mara / Oct

Bernd de Bruijn

Count UP

1275 (members)/ 2000 (target)

We need your support!

Recruit **one** other member!

NOTICES

A Staff Member Leaves for Further Studies

Anthony Kuria, has been the TBA Officer for two and a half years. He has been offered a bursary to study for a Masters degree in conservation biology at the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of Ornithology, University of Cape Town South Africa, which he begins in January 2001.

Many of the recent contributions to the Training, Research Grants and Job Opportunity columns of the Nature Net have been his contributions recieved through the TBA network. We wish Kuria all the best with his studies and despite the distance we hope he will continue to contribute to Nature Net.

In the meantime Lawerence Maina will be handling TBA operations.

Have You Sighted any Carnivore Dens?

The Field Museum in Chicago, has a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Museums of Kenya and is interested in starting collaborative research on carnivore dens.

If you have any information on the location of carnivore dens anywhere in Kenya please contact *George Amutete, Ornithology Department, National Museums of Kenya, Box 40658, Nairobi. Tel: 742131/2, email kbirds@africaonline.co.ke*

DECEMBER DIARY

Sat 2	Arabuko-Sokoke birdwalk
Sun 3	NNP Game Count
Sat 16	Botanical Outing
Sun 17	Pot Luck
Tue 26 - Sun 31	Field trip to Kuku
Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning	

JANUARY DIARY

Sat 6	Arabuko-Sokoke birdwalk
Mon 8	Talk on Taita Hills
Sun 21	Pot Luck
Mon 29	Tree Walk
Wed 31	Members Lunch
Birdwalks and/ waterbird counts every Wednesday Morning	

PUBLICATIONS

Journal of East African Natural History

Special Issue, Volume 87 Parts 1/2 1998

This volume comprises of the **Proceedings of the Biodiversity and Conservation of the Eastern Arc Mountains of Tanzania and Kenyo** Conference held in Morogoro, Tanzania on 1 - 5 December 1997.

This 367 page volume is available from the Front office, Nature Kenya at 2500/- to members or 2800/- to non-members.

The Journal of East Africa Natural History is the leading scientific conservation publication for the eastern Africa region, published since 1910. *Jaurnal subscription is 1000/- far Nature Kenya members.*

EXCURSIONS

Botanical outing

Day trip for Saturday 16 December

You are invited to participate in a botanical inventory and learn about aspects of plant natural history. The venue for the trip will be decided in early December depending on the prevailing weather conditions. Let us meet at the Nairobi Museums car park at 8:00 a.m.on the 16th.

Please contact Benny Bytebier / Elizabeth Nyambura, at the office to book a place as we have limited transport; lift offers are highly welcome.

This is a Plants Committee organised activity.

In the Shadow of Kilimanjaro over the holiday season

Tuesday 26 to Sunday 31 December '00

Join us on this safari to Kuku Group Ranch, located 225 kms south of Nairobi and near the Amboseli National Park. The centre is run by the African Environmental Education Fund (AEEF) and generates revenue for educational purposes and for local communty projects.

With views of Mt. Kilimanjaro, wildlife and many species of plants to learn about, the hikes within the ranch, led by two guides, are very enjoyable.

Accommodation at the Centre is in tents with twin beds and mosquito netting. Permanent structures include a central common area, toilets, showers, a library and a kitchen.

Meet on Tuesday 26 December at 7:30 a.m. at the Nairobi National Museum car park to depart at 8:00 a.m. We should arrive at Kuku in time for lunch.

Costs per person
Accommodation and meals for the duration: Kshs 7000
Transport in Nature Kenya Landrover using all the seats: Kshs 3500. You may use your own transport.

Please note

1) Bring your own soft or alcoholic **beverages**.
2) Lunch will consist of sandwiches and is vegetarian so bring snacks if you think it necessary.
3) If possible bring **sleeping bags**.
4) **Booking and payment deadline: 15 December.** This trip is only possible with a minimum of 12 persons.
   The office will be closed from 22 December so please ensure you have all required information before this date.
   The leader will give directions on the day of departure.
   Please note due to time constraints boaking will anly be accepted with payment.
5) **Coast members**, if you wish to take part please get in touch with the office and we will arrange to collect you from Emali, if possible.

Nairobi National Park Game Count

The next game count for Nairobi National Park is scheduled for Sunday 3 December, 2000.

Those interested in participation should contact Mr. Samuel Muli at the Nairobi National Park Senior Warden's office, KWS HQ before 30 November 2000.

Waterbird Counts, January 2001

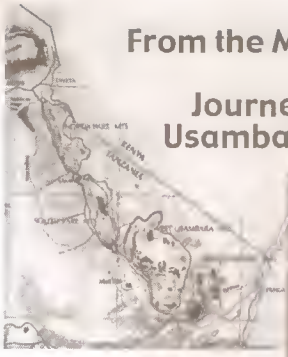
A provisional schedule for the January 2001 waterbird counts has already been proposed. The size of the teams in 2001 will be limited and only the most experienced counters on our mailing list will be contacted. This is due to lack of enough funds to accommodate the usual team sizes.

The planned activities in January 2001 are *Lake Bogoria an 5/6th, Lake Nakuru 6/7th, Elementaita 19/20th, Naivasha, Oloiden, Sanachi 20/21th, Magadi 27/28th, Lake Victoria, Kenya Caast 27/28th* (to be counted by the Important Bird Areas Site Support Groups).

The Wednesday Morning Birdwalks in January 2001 will also be taking part in the Waterbird counts as follows:*Limuru, Manguo on 3rd, Dandora Sewage Warks 10th, Nairabi National Park and Langata Wetlands 17th, Kenyatta University Pands 24th.* **Please note that the Dandora count normally takes a little longer than the others and the group may not make it back to the museum before 2:00 p.m.**

For further information, please contact Oliver Nasirwa or Alfred Owino, Ornithology Department, National Museums of Kenya, tel: 742131/2 or email kbirds@africaonline.co.ke

From the Mountains to the Sea, Journey to the East Usambaras & Shimoni



The Eastern Arc Forests

The Eastern Arc Mountains are a chain of ancient mountain blocks running through from the Taita Hills to the Ulunguru Mountains in southern Tanzania. Scattered fragments of forest lie on these blocks which have been isolated and comparatively stable for a long period of evolutionary time. As a consequence of their great age, isolation and fragmented nature, these forests support unusually high levels of endemism and diversity. They have been categorised as being one of the world's hotspots of biodiversity.

The Usambara Mountains

Lying in the northeastern part of Tanzania, the Usambara Mountains are part of the Eastern Arc chain. Divided into the East and West Usambaras, these forests support the highest known diversity and endemism of plant and animal species of all montane forest regions in East Africa. It is thought that 25% of the plants, 30% of amphibians and 70% of the chameleons are endemic to the Usambaras. Several globally threatened bird species are found here, including the Usambara Eagle Owl, Amani Sunbird, Swynnerton's Forest Rabin and the East Coast Akalat. Threatened mammals include Abbot's Duiker and the Bushy-tailed Mongoose.

Amani Research Centre

The Amani research centre was established in 1893 by the German colonial government. It became the headquarters of an agricultural station in 1902 but now forms part of the Tanzania National Institute of Medical Research, which specialises in vectar barne diseases. During its early years as an agricultural station, a substantial botanical garden was established covering 300 hectares and containing a wide range of indigenous and exotic species. We will stay at a hostel nearby and will be hosted by the East Usambara Catchment Forest Programme.

Accommodation at Amani will be in small-shared houses where you will sleep in three or four bedrooms. There are shared toilet and washing facilities for each house, some of which are outdoors and most are cold water. We will eat together in a small dining room.

Lushoto is at the centre of the Western Usambaras and Muller's Mountain Lodge makes a good base for hikes.

While at **Shimoni**, we can explore the Wasini Island or go snorkelling in the Kisite-Mpunguti Marine National Park.

Tentative Itinerary from April '01

Date	**Thursday 12**
Travel	Nairobi - Lushoto Approx. 610 kms
Room and Board	Mullers Mountain Lodge (dinner & overnight)
Date	**Friday 13**
Room and Board	Mullers Mountain Lodge (breakfast, lunch, dinner & overnight)
Activity	Mountain walk through various villages, across valleys & streams
Date	**Saturday 14**
Travel	Lushoto - East Usambaras Approx. 200 kms
Room and Board	(breakfast, lunch at Muller's) Amani Hostels (dinner & overnight)
Activities	Morning visit the Sakharani Mission and sample their red and white wines or walk in the forest behind the Lodge. Short walk up to Mbomole Peak before dinner at Amani.
Date	**Sunday 15**
Room and Board	Amani Hostels (breakfast, lunch, dinner & overnight)
Activities	Look for African violets and birdwatch
Date	**Monday 16**
Room and Board	Amani Hostels (breakfast, lunch, dinner & overnight)
Activities	Visit the Botanic Garden
Date	**Tuesday 17**
Travel	East Usambaras to Shimoni
Room and Board	Amani Hostels (breakfast) Shimoni Reef Hotel (late lunch, dinner & overnight)
Date	**Wednesday 18**
Room and Board	Shimoni Reef Hotel (breakfast, lunch, dinner & overnight)
Optional activities	Visit Wasini Island/ snorkelling at Kisite
Date	**Thursday 19**
Travel	Shimoni - Nairobi
Room and Board	Shimoni Reef Hotel (breakfast) lunch enroute

Communication with Tanzania is rather slow and the itinerary and costs will be confirmed at a later stage.

Cost per person: Ksh 22000 including room and board as mentioned above & guide fees.
Vehicle per person Ksh 8000 using all seats in Landrover
Meals enroute and optional excursions while at Shimoni are not included.

Space is limited for this trip and bookings will only be confirmed with a booking deposit of 10,000/-. Refunds for cancellations after the deadline date will not be possible.

The **booking deadline is 15 February '01**.